

II. Forming and Sustaining Collaboratives

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How to Use This Section

In this section, you will find guidance to support the development of a Community Collaborative. Each section contains guidance and tools to assist you. If you are in the very beginning stages of collaborative development, it is recommended that you review the sections from the beginning. If your Collaborative is more experienced, it is recommended that you review each question and review materials under the section that best supports the stage of development you may be experiencing. Each question is placed in the order that the general collaborative development occurs.

Under most questions, you will also find useful “**TOOLS**” to assist you in that particular area of Collaborative development. Each of these tools will have a link with the title as well as a brief summary of its use. The **TOOLS** section may also include other helpful links, websites or articles.

What is Collaboration?

Collaboration¹ is defined as “A mutually beneficial and well-defined relationship entered into by two or more organizations to achieve results they are more likely to achieve together than alone.” Collaboration should not be confused with the definitions of cooperation and coordination, which do support and contribute to the development of collaboration.

Cooperation: “The first step in collaboration – people agree to help each other in specific ways” and **Coordination:** “The second step in collaboration – you help each other out, but no one changes the way business is done.” **Collaboration** is achieved once everyone places their issues aside and blends their efforts to make something new happen.

Before forming a Community Collaborative, it is important to identify mutual issues that a group of agencies, stakeholders, family members and community partners can recognize as ones they can accomplish together better than individually or as a single agency. Furthermore, the purpose or issue of focus for the Community Collaborative should cross all boundaries, regardless of where one may work or live.

¹ Forest, C. (2003). *Empowerment skills for family workers: A worker handbook*. Cornell University.

TOOLS

Keys to Successful Collaboration: As you move through the steps in forming and sustaining a collaborative, it is important to keep in mind the keys to any successful collaborative. This is true whether it is a collaboration among agencies or between a parent and their child's therapist or in creating a formal group. This handout, adapted from *Empowerment Skills for Family Workers* (Forest, 2003), outlines these critical elements for any successful collaboration.

Coordination, Cooperation, and Collaboration: In moving toward true collaboration, individuals and agencies may go through stages of coordination and cooperation. This handout, adapted from the Cornell University's curriculum, *Empowerment Skills for Family Workers*, provides definitions and examples of these initial steps.

Why Form Collaboratives?

In North Carolina, Community Collaboratives initially became a statewide expectation in order to better serve children with serious emotional and behavioral challenges and their families. The vision was that in order to create services that were of high quality, culturally competent, coordinated, and easily accessible, all those partners, especially families, needed to come together to plan, deliver and evaluate these services. Beginning largely as part of system of care grants for children having serious emotional and behavioral challenges, Collaboratives are now required components of each Local Management Entities' plan and benefit the delivery of services for children and families in any community.

In the broader sense, a Collaborative may have varying visions or purposes. Some may continue to focus on children with emotional and behavioral challenges, whereas others may elect to focus on children having any disability. In other communities, Collaboratives have combined to focus on services across ages, addressing both child, adolescent and adult services. However, regardless of specific visions or purposes, one thing each Collaborative should share is the commitment and vision on delivering high quality services.

The ultimate responsibility of the Collaborative may also vary. Some may serve as any or all of following functions:

- Overseers of service implementation
- Coordinators and communicators of system related information
- Monitors of system implementation and practice change
- Advocates for children and families
- Plan developers (i.e., training, cultural competency, service gaps, etc.)
- Recruiters of service providers

Again, the important factor is that the Collaborative is clear on its focus, agrees on its purpose, develops its vision together, and includes consumers in all aspects.

Why and What Do We Need to Assess When Initially Forming a Collaborative?

Why Do It?

Assessments *prevent communities from creating multiple collaborative groups that overlap in function and create confusion and inefficiency* for consumers and providers. Assessing how existing initiatives can support each other can result in well-coordinated service delivery, implementation of multiple grants in the community and/or unified efforts to accomplish similar or same goals. Many times existing initiatives have may have the same vision and purpose as the one another group finds necessary. Assessments also provide the community with a *comprehensive look at the needs and possible reasons for a collaborative, the resources existing within the community to address the challenges, a baseline from which to evaluate the efforts, and information to guide a strategic plan* and develop needed committees.

What Do You Assess?

When assessing for existing initiatives look for *similarities in vision, mission and guiding principles across initiatives*. You may use the following questions as a guide to assess like collaborative groups in your community.

- What is the vision and purpose of the group(s)?
- What subcommittees exist?
- What resources exist? (e.g., staff, ability to analyze data, major consumer advocacy group, primary service provider is a member, presence of informal supports)
- How does the group addresses cultural competency issues?
- What is the make up of membership of existing collaborative groups, data collected, outcomes and goals?
- Is the membership diverse, reflective of those the group serves?
- How are youth and family involved in their collaborative work?

In your exploration, seek to find out where the connections or lack of connections exist in the community, system, etc. Also, assess which existing community initiatives are already addressing cultural competence, social justice issues, cultural programming, training, and evaluation. Assess what groups/initiatives create a conduit for assessing or accessing grassroots groups/organization and citizens. Explore how existing initiatives support or develop a skilled family driven workforce.

As you assess existing initiatives and begin the “what”, “how” and “who” of your Collaborative, the following tools may prove helpful in thinking it through the elements.

If your community already has a Community Collaborative or group that is charged with collaborative work, it is often necessary to periodically assess your group’s success or current activities as they relate to accomplishing SOC. The following tools can assist in surveying how implementation of Child and Family Team practice, agency partnering and policy are progressing.

TOOLS

Implementing High-Quality Collaborative Individualized Service/Support Planning: Necessary Conditions: This document from the Research and Training Center at Portland State University provides a comprehensive overview of some of the necessary conditions for a successful collaborative process. While most of the document focuses on the collaboration that needs to occur when developing a treatment plan, the guidance and self-assessment, particularly the information contained in Chapter 4 and in the Appendix can provide a good framework from which to develop a community collaborative. The document can be downloaded from:

<http://www.rtc.pdx.edu/PDF/pbImpHighQualISP.pdf>

Community Collaborative Elements: Community Collaborative elements are those specific details that are needed to properly build Collaboratives. This checklist includes all the possible necessities and challenges of forming high functioning Collaboratives. Review this document with your fellow collaborative members, check each one that exists, and place an “X” by those you may lack. This checklist can inform your next steps as you develop, grow or improve your collaborative work.

Family Involvement Self-Assessment: (Family Resource Coalition of America)
In order for SOC to truly be implemented, it requires involvement of family members at all levels, especially the collaborative level. It is important to understand what involvement with families currently exists in the system and then determine next steps to creating new partnerships. This particular tool is helpful in assessing the quality and nature of family involvement in your collaborative or initiative.

Wraparound Organizational Assessment (Lead Agency) - Portland State University
This tool assesses the organizational support for wraparound teams from a team member perspective.

Wraparound Organizational Assessment (Agency Partners) - Portland State University: This tool assesses the organizational support for Individualized Service/Support Planning (ISP), *which is the equivalent of a Child and Family Team (CFT)*, from the perspective of team members.

Wraparound System Assessment – Portland State University: The purpose of this checklist is to provide a structured way to assess the policy and funding context that surrounds wraparound teams and the lead agency that houses these teams.

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How Do We Get a Collaborative Started?

Once you have determined that you need a Collaborative then look at next steps to actually forming the group. You now have a purpose based on something: a mandate, a grant requirement, a need or a desire.

So let's look at the steps to development:

Step One - Collaborative membership: Determine the people that you either need or wish to have initially participate in assisting you with the development of the Collaborative. You will not have full membership in the beginning because you need some steps in place in order to recruit more members later. Consider who is affected by accomplishing your purpose. Also, be sure to include members that reflect the population you serve.

Finally, another critical party that must be at the table is parent/family and youth representation. Family involvement doesn't just happen. Family involvement is a planned event. In order to have true family involvement, the Collaborative and providers of services must have a vision of what the involvement will look like, how it will work and what is expected as a result of the involvement. According to one family member, "Involve families from the very beginning, think it through, and make the expectations crystal clear." Family involvement will look different in different communities. Families and caregivers must be comfortable in their role at the personal level of care as well as at the system level. Many will need a great deal of support to grow into self advocates and meeting participants while others will into system with one giant step. All levels of family participation should be valued.

Family members are the key to full implementation of SOC and they should be involved from the very beginning. Their feedback, input and ideas reflect what consumers need. This is the opportunity to inform the system about the changes necessary to improve outcomes. Proper preparation, as mentioned above, means orienting new members, especially family members that may not work in the current system, to what the Collaborative is about and why they are such critical members. Recruitment of family members needs to include a focus somewhat different from other members, because many family members have not been invited to the table before. In addition, family members sometimes come with a negative history with the public system, thus resulting in a lack of trust. Therefore, once family members come to the table a real, honest approach to the work is necessary. Moving into this kind of work without thought and preparation can result in failure of accomplishing the vision. For more guidance on developing respectful partnerships with families and youth, see Section III of the tool kit.

Step Two - Purpose, vision and mission development: Once people are identified and invited to the table, start with ensuring that all everyone is clear on what your group's purpose is. Next establish an agreed upon vision and mission for the group. This can be done in numerous ways. Some Collaboratives go through as formal process and hire outside facilitators to conduct the development of the vision and mission. Others may use a meeting simply to discuss and gain agreement on vision and mission. There are some frameworks that can assist in organizing the discussions and they are listed below.

TOOLS

Analysis Structure; Planning Formats; SWOT Format

Each of the above formats offers a framework for structuring planning processes.

Step Three – Revisit Collaborative membership: Now that you have established the purpose, vision and mission of the group, you have enough information to recruit more members for the long haul. When a Collaborative initially forms, the need for additional members and ongoing recruitment of members becomes an issue. Continue your search for members that can commit for a year, have some decision making authority and are supportive and connected to the purpose of your Collaborative.

Getting the right people to the table is partially informed by the Collaborative’s vision, mission and purpose. Decision-makers, or those who have been given decision-making authority, need to be at the table. Otherwise, progress and follow up are much slower. Furthermore, if the Collaborative provides oversight to SOC implementation, then people who can authorize changes in their system are critical to the membership.

At this point, some key questions to ask yourselves as a group before moving forward might be:

1. Do the Collaborative vision, mission and agreements reflect System of Care values and principles?
2. Will the action and work of the Collaborative make access to services easier for children and families?
3. Are the right people at the table and willing to move forward into new ways of doing business?
4. What can be done differently to reach people based upon information from and about the community?
5. Does our governing body represent the community being served?
6. How will the community economically benefit from collaboration?

TOOLS

Family Involvement Self-Assessment: (Family Resource Coalition of America)
This particular tool is helpful in assessing the quality and nature of family involvement in your collaborative or initiative.

Family Professional Partnership - A Continuum Toward Collaboration: This document shows the differences and similarities between conventional, cooperative and collaborative systems and allows the viewer to identify the process they may be using.

Involving Families in Policy Work: (Federation of Families for Children’s Mental Health)

This Tip Sheet offers guidance for involving family members in the work policy groups. It provides a definition of “family member” and briefly describes the context for family involvement in policy group work. It contains strategies for

recruiting family members to join policy groups, training and supporting family members to do the work, and sustaining their participation over time.

Questions to Assess Family Involvement in System Design and Development: (Pat Solomon and Libby Jones) These guidelines can be used to help agencies to incorporate family involvement in their agency. It can be used as a checklist to see if they are practicing family driven care.

Step Four – Collaborative Leadership: Selecting Collaborative leadership or a Chairperson should be decided by the Collaborative members through a planned, organized vote. There should be names placed on a ballot or distributed to members in advance to consider and then a vote should be cast at the Collaborative meeting.

Often a newly forming Collaborative doesn't organize recruitment of a new Chairperson, sometimes hoping that someone will just take the lead. However, leadership of a Collaborative is critical to starting off right. You want to recruit a person that has vision, understands the purpose and tasks at hand, can encourage and create an environment for group discussions and decision-making, and support the needs of the group as they develop their collaborative skills together.

There are two basic tasks that should be completed before recruiting a Chairperson:

- 1) Have a job description so it is clear what the Collaborative expects of him/her.
- 2) Have a clear purpose, vision and mission statement so that the Chairperson knows what he/she is expected to lead the group to do.

At this stage of the game, the above two steps should be completed, so you should be ready to tackle this task. There are several ways to prepare the ballot for leadership.

- 1) Create a document that covers the expectations of the leadership, chair responsibilities, job description, etc. based on your purpose, vision and mission.
- 2) Get nominations from the Collaborative members privately and place on the ballot.
- 3) Meet individually with each person nominated to be sure they understand the responsibilities of the position.
- 4) Get acceptance from individuals nominated to place their name on the ballot.
- 5) Create a ballot and vote on your leadership/chairperson at the Collaborative meeting.

TOOLS

Collaborative Chair Job Description: The following attachment titled ***Job Description of a Board Chair***, is one example of a job description for a chairperson. This document offers an example of job/role descriptions of Collaborative chairs to be used by your Collaborative or to prompt discussion that may lead to your final product.

Checklist for the Chairperson: (Nathan Garber): “To make meetings creative and useful, a good chairperson is essential. The chair can make the difference between a successful, productive, stimulating meeting and a frustrating,

disappointing, waste of time. Chairing a meeting effectively does not come naturally, but it can be learned through practice and effort. Use this checklist to help you as you learn the job.”

Step Five - Bylaws: Bylaws are important to develop in the next step of Collaborative development, as this document will establish how business will be conducted on a day-to-day basis. This document will be the Collaborative’s guide for membership, structure of meetings, and how decisions are made by the group.

There are several elements that are usually in Bylaws:

- Name, Mission, Purpose
- Membership
- Collaborative Officers and Committee Chairs (Terms of Office and Responsibilities)
- Committees
- Meetings
- Amendments
- Parliamentary Authority

TOOLS

Community Collaborative Sample Bylaws: For any organized group. Bylaws must be established to provide parameters for the group. This document reflects one example of bylaws developed to guide the work of the Community Collaborative and may be used or serves as a guide for the development of your local bylaws.

Bylaw format: This is a format or outline that can be used to guide Collaborative bylaw development. It contains headings for the basic elements of bylaws as noted above.

Step Six – Strategic Planning: Strategic plans are an integral part of SOC development. They provide opportunities to prioritize the work and lay out a map of SOC development in the community. Many Collaboratives use an outside facilitator to develop the plan. One advantage to this is that members want to be free to brainstorm and discuss all the options openly. Therefore, it will be difficult if it is expected for a Collaborative member or Chairperson to conduct the process.

Strategic plans should pull together the broad functions and activities of the Collaborative over a 1-3 year period of time. The final plan should inform the development of Memoranda of Agreement among members and reflect the purpose, vision and mission of the group. Lastly, strategic plans should inform the need for committees to be established and provide enough guidance for committees and tasks forces to begin taking action steps.

Strategic planning processes often include larger groups other than the formal Collaborative membership. In order to get your “best bang for your buck” from this planning process, consider the following steps:

- Bring proper people to the table that can commit and ensure Collaborative representatives follow through
- Include family members in all development processes
- Facilitate a process that ensures all ideas are shared and considered
- Clearly and specifically identify community priorities
- Clearly and specifically identify community strengths
- As decisions are made, review the Collaborative purpose, vision and mission statement to ensure coordinated thinking and planning
- Create 1-3 year overarching plan which informs action steps
- Use, revisit and review your strategic plan throughout the time period being addressed to ensure focus and outcomes

TOOLS

Strategic Planning Flow Chart: This tool can be used as a guide that provides planning structure. These categories can provide a progression of thinking through the strategic planning process.

Step Seven – Establish Committees: Most plans fail not because they are not good plans with excellent work put into them, but because of a lack of proper implementation and follow up. Careful planning for implementation of new interventions is critical to the success of System of Care development or any system change.

Committees, work groups, tasks forces, all should be assigned to action steps. The Collaborative is not the group to get bogged down by details. However, this group should make assignments, monitor progress, and review and evaluate final outcomes from committees.

Deciding when to go to committee comes about in several ways, but answering the following questions may assist in that decision:

1. Does the task on the Collaborative table involve research or more investigation before a decision or recommendation can be made?
2. Is expertise needed from people other than the Collaborative members to ensure outcomes are reached?
3. Are there details that need to be thought through and drafted for the Collaborative before a decision or recommendation can be made?
4. Is there more time needed to develop and formulate an idea before a decision or recommendation can be made?
5. Are there tasks specific to strategic planning that require committee work?
6. Is there detailed work to be done that will ensure action steps occur?

Once a committee or work group is determined necessary, consider the following details for assigning membership, monitoring committee work and reporting:

- Teams/people are identified that have the time and skills and administrative authority to ensure new policies or programs are actually implemented

- Clear deadlines for follow up are set
- Obstacles to implementation are dealt with immediately at the Collaborative level
- Collaborative members make commitments to each step and/or adjustments are made to plans
- Progress reports are shared at every Collaborative meeting by committee representatives

Step Eight – Tools for Sustaining the Collaborative: Collaboratives do not remain the same and there are several key elements to sustaining a Collaborative and ensuring its success. These elements are:

- Open, honest dialogues with ways to work through tension and conflict
- Finding common ground, language and goals
- Keep all members' eyes on the prize (vision, goal, purpose, etc.)
- Constantly educate each other about new information
- Orient and recruit new members as other members leave, move or rotate off
- Revisit and rewrite MOA's
- Revisit committees as it relates to the group's vision and mission; establish new committees and sunset existing ones as needed
- Have retreats regularly (annually or regularly as decided by the Collaborative) to reestablish vision, mission, goals, purpose and work activities
- Always make decisions together when you have the authority. This always feels productive!
- Use your local grants, funding sources such as Non-UCR dollars, and other funding to promote, fund or address gaps in your community.
- Share the vision, the work and the successes – this SOC work cannot be done alone
- Check in with each other to be sure you are on track and call each other on it if you are not!
- Celebrate successes
- Continue to increase family and youth involvement
- Make adjustments to plans, work and tasks as new issues arise that impact them
- Communicate your work to others
- Gather data and communicate to all necessary parties
- Make your Collaborative important and needed in the community

Collaboratives do not start and sustain without effort and planning. Be calculated in how you plan, choose strong leadership, have retreats and continually evaluate how you are doing as a group. Use checklists and questions in this section to self evaluate. Also, know that the road will be bumpy; some tasks will be difficult and acknowledge that this is so.

There are also concrete tools that support the ongoing work of a Collaborative. These tools fall into two broad categories: 1) Conducting Business, and 2) Sustaining the Work

1. Conducting Business: You want Collaborative meetings to be productive and useful or people will stop attending. There are many ways to ensure successful meetings. One tip is that no matter what your structure, post the Collaborative vision, mission, and purpose at every meeting. Referencing these documents regularly helps keeps the focus of the group. There are also several

questions the group can ask after each meeting to see if the business was conducted in a way that promoted SOC:

1. In this meeting, did suggestions or strategies reflect System of Care values and principles?
2. Did suggestions or strategies make access to services easier for children and families?
3. Did we reduce barriers or silos within the system?
4. Did we move any closer to blending or streamlining or coordinating existing resources or increase collaboration across departments or units?
5. Did we include input from every Collaborative member in discussions and is everyone leaving with a clear understanding of what was discussed?
6. Are consumers (youth and family) included in all levels of the Collaborative's function?
7. Are we ready to move forward to the next item or issue in our next meeting?
8. How do we discuss issues (language, sharing information, etc.)?
9. How did we as a group develop, prioritize and agree on this fiscal year's Non-UCR dollars/plan?

TOOLS

Acronyms Document: This document lists acronyms used in our everyday work language.

Non-UCR Review Checklist: This form can be used to guide Collaboratives in their planning for use of their local non-UCR dollars. The criteria and guidelines for Non-UCR funds can be found on the Division website:

www.ncdhhs.gov/mhddsas: go to State and Local Government (on left side of screen), then go to Child and Family (center of screen), and then to Comprehensive Treatment Services Program.

- **Setting agendas and structure for the meetings:** There are many ways to structure meetings, but the key is to provide some structure. However, flexibility is still needed so that members all understand discussions before moving forward. Several tools are listed below that can guide or assist in setting up meetings. Some Collaborative use a decision-making tree to guide their process, some use ground rules to ensure meetings go well and participation occurs from everyone, some use formal structured meetings to conduct business with agendas and outlines.

Conducting productive meetings is another crucial step to strong Collaborative development. The structure of the meeting should reflect several things: 1) a process agreed upon by all as how to conduct meetings, 2) A process in place that allows for everyone to participate and no one person to dominate, 3) a clear decision-making process, 4) allows for enough discussion of new issues before requesting votes from members, 5) summary at the end of meetings that details what was agreed upon during the meeting, what tasks have been assigned to be accomplished between meetings, and will happen at the next meeting, and 6) documentation of meetings.

TOOLS

Collaborative Decision Making Process: This serves as an example of a decision- making process to guide the Collaborative in how decisions and votes would take place. When Collaboratives begin developing as a team and begin making decisions, it is important to be clear about how, when and who can make decisions. As a group, determine the flow of approval, authority and decision-making for your collaborative. This particular example can assist in initial discussions.

Sample Meeting agenda: This is simply an example of one Collaborative’s agenda used to guide the meeting.

Sample Ground Rules for meeting: This is an example of ground rules that may be used in a meeting. Depending on the level of involvement members have had together, more or less ground rules may be needed to guide or remind the group of how they will conduct business. However, ground rules should be developed by the members together and posted at every meeting to remind them of their commitments.

- **Memorandum of Agreement:** Now your group has a purpose, vision, some members, bylaws and it is time to agree on priorities and support the work to be done. Memoranda of Agreement (MOA) serve as an agreement among members and agencies that reflect a commitment to principles, tasks and funding that will be necessary to accomplish the Collaborative’s goals. These agreements are sometimes developed in the same manner as the vision and mission statements, through outside facilitation. As Collaborative groups begin to detail their agreements, it sometimes becomes more complicated to write out details that meet everyone’s mandates, goals and existing strategic plans. However, it is not necessary to do so.

When Collaboratives form, they do not become high functioning groups automatically. It takes asking questions of the agencies, acknowledging differences and barriers and strategic planning to move the group to true collaborative work. One way to begin the collaborative journey is to start with a list of questions to guide the development of an initial local Memorandum of Agreement (MOA).

TOOLS

Questions to Ask When Developing a Collaborative MOA: This document may be helpful in guiding Collaboratives through the development phases.

- **Conflict management:** It is inevitable that when Collaboratives form, there will be conflict. What is also inevitable is that there must be a clear process in place for dealing with those conflicts. When Collaborative groups ignore, avoid, deny or downplay problems and conflict, then the Collaborative group’s chances of reaching their highest potential and functioning is lessened. Creating an environment that supports honest dialogue about tough issues is critical to the full development of Collaboratives.

TOOLS

Conflict Resolution Meetings - Sample Ground Rules: All groups, whether dealing with conflict or not, need to create ground rules or norms to guide them. This document serves as an example of ground rules set for a group working through conflict resolution.

Conflict Resolution Process Protocol: It is inevitable as collaborative groups move through development that there will be conflicts. Avoiding conflicts prevents continued collaboration so preparing for and communicating how to handle conflict will best serve any group. This protocol offers an example of process for conflict resolution.

Conflict Resolution and Decision Making Checks and Balances: The questions in this document allow for members of a conflict resolution meeting to evaluate their process and ensure the meeting purpose was served. Asking these questions of each other before leaving the table can prevent unfinished business from having to be revisited.

System of Care Planning Checklist: This checklist provides a list of questions to ask, assess and agree on before moving forward.

- **New Member Orientation:** One of the complications of Collaborative membership is that the group is often very diverse and they may or may not understand the purpose of the group, language or acronyms used during the meetings or roles of members present. Orientation of new members is critical for two reasons: 1) so that you can invite new members with a clear role for them and why you want them to join your group, and 2) so that you can have new members properly prepared for their first meeting.

When bringing more people to the table it will be critical to properly prepare them. Family members, agencies that have not always interacted with each other in the past, community stakeholders, may need special orientation and preparation before attending their first meeting. You do not want members to feel lost when they first attend the collaborative meeting or they may not return. Therefore, it is best to prepare people properly upfront and then they can hit the road running.

TOOLS

Community Collaborative Orientation Example: This document briefly outlines key points to cover in orientation of new Collaborative members.

Elements of Collaborative New Member Orientation: This document outlines elements for orientation of new members. This provides a format to use when developing your local orientation. It can be altered as you see appropriate.

2. Sustaining the Work: Another key to sustaining Collaborative is to be sure everyone knows how to measure their success and use their data.

- **Measuring Success:** The way to measure success is to be crystal clear about your purpose and outcomes. Then and only then can you measure success along the way. Accomplishments are one measure of success. According to tasks, assignments or goals of the Collaborative, finishing those tasks in full results in success. Often Collaborative members talk about many broad topics, but seldom plan the specific tasks that lead to true implementation of a larger SOC goal. Specific tasks and clear indicators of what defines success are necessary to reach any goal. Success should be celebrated along the way.

So in simple terms:

1. set goal(s)
2. break them down to doable tasks
3. follow through until the task is completed
4. do not forget, drop or leave a task without either finishing or changing what the task was to accomplish
5. review related data for change
6. celebrate success
7. move onto the next task(s)

In addition, the Collaborative members can ask the following questions of themselves periodically:

1. Are family members and youth a regular voice in the meetings or in committees?
 2. Are we creating change in the community and in our public systems?
 3. Are there new policies and procedures as a result of our work?
 4. Are there more services and easier access to service for children and families because of our work?
 5. Do the data show improvement in consumer/family satisfaction and service/clinical outcomes?
- **Using Data:** Data can be one of the greatest tools for a Collaborative or any group. Data reflect trends in the system, what's working and what's not. Data can be compiled from the collection of specific outcomes information, demographic information, consumer/family satisfaction or quality improvement activities, all of which can inform the Collaborative of its very next steps.

Reporting of the data is one way to accurately inform the Collaborative of how it is doing, how the system is doing and where to focus next. However, there need to be some steps taken first before data feels useful to Collaborative members:

1. Be sure everyone at the table understands the data reports
2. Bring data that relates to the purpose and tasks of the Collaborative
3. Create a flow chart of how the information will be used and who else the data connects to (other groups, agencies, people, etc.)

When data is useful, understood and regularly communicated, it is incredible how productive meetings can be. Below is an example of a flow chart developed by one Collaborative to show where the data collected would go and why.

TOOLS

Wraparound System Assessment – Portland State University: The purpose of this checklist is to provide a structured way to assess the policy and funding context that surrounds wraparound teams and the lead agency that houses these teams.

Mechanism for Utilization of Data in Collaboratives: This chart is one example of how data related activities could be communicated to inform the Collaborative and Committees.

Helpful Links and Articles

Websites:

Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Substance Abuse website:

www.ncdhhs.gov/mhddsas

Child and Family Services website:

<http://www.dhhs.state.nc.us/mhddsas/childandfamily/index-new.htm>

Building Systems of Care: A Primer: *By Sheila Pires, 2002*

This primer is a fundamental technical assistance tool for state and local stakeholders engaged in developing systems of care for children with behavioral health disorders and their families. It describes over 30 critical systems of care functions that require structure, such as governance, care management, financing and quality improvement, and examines the pros and cons of different structural approaches. The Primer also focuses on essential components of the system-building process, such as family and youth partnerships, cultural competence, strategic planning and leadership. It incorporates examples from systems of care around the country and useful resources materials. The materials can be purchased from the following website: gucchd.georgetown.edu

http://gucchd.georgetown.edu/topics/mental_health/index.html: The Georgetown University Center for Child and Human Development has taken a leadership role in addressing the mental health needs of children, youth and their families at the policy, research, training/consultation and direct service levels.

http://www.aodsystems.com/CCI/CCI_Start.htm; This is the website that includes the two instruments mentioned under “TOOLS” above titled *Collaborative Capacity Instrument – Local*, and *Collaborative Capacity Instrument – State (NCSACW)*

Articles:

Implementation Factors Toolkit:

The research and training Center seeks to strengthen the development and

implementation of effective systems of care so that children with serious emotional disorders may be better able to live, learn, work, play and thrive in their communities. To guide its research and to assist states and communities, the Center has developed a model of factors that it believes contribute to implementation of effective Systems of care. The model is presented on a 2-page summary in list form.

<http://www.effectivemeetings.com/teams/teamwork/effective.asp>: This article shows steps to be taken to conduct effective collaborative/team meetings

<http://ezinearticles.com/?Effective-Team-Building-For-Organizational-Success&id=20619&opt=print>: This article reflects stages of collaborative or team building development

<http://www.allbusiness.com/human-resources/employee-development-team-building/8516-1.html>: This article discusses the top ten components of effective teams